

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
Utah Word Processor Format (02731)
(Approved 10/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name COMPTON, ALMA, HOUSE

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 142 S. 100 East N/A not for publication

city, town Brigham City N/A vicinity

state Utah code UT county Box Elder code 003 zip code 84302

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

No. of contributing resources
previously listed in the
National Register -0-

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. ___ See continuation sheet.

Max Jensen
Signature of certifying official

February 26, 1988
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. ___ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

**Entered in the
National Register**

entered in the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet

Shelvia Byers 4-7-88

___ determined eligible for the National Register. ___ See continuation sheet

___ determined not eligible for the National Register.

___ removed from the National Register.

___ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN

other: Victorian Cottage

foundation stone

walls brick

stone

roof asphalt

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Built in 1908, the Alma Compton House is a 1-1/2 story Victorian Cottage with brick exterior walls and a stone foundation. With the exception of metal railing on the porch, the house is virtually unaltered on both the exterior and interior, and it is in excellent condition.

The house is rectangular in shape with its narrow end facing the street. The front porch is inset into the right front corner. There is a gable-roof bay projecting from each side of the house, and an original frame porch on the rear with a second-story balcony. The exterior walls are accented with rough-faced brick on the bowed bay on the facade and heavy, smoothly finished stone lintels, sills, and water table. The gable ends are sided with the original wood shingles. All of the original double-hung windows are still in place.

The interior of the house is virtually unchanged from its original appearance. It has a side-passage plan, with the entrance hall and stairway located at the right front corner. Other rooms on the main floor include the parlor, living room, one bedroom, a bathroom, and a kitchen and pantry at the rear. Upstairs are three bedrooms with closets, a bathroom, and a small "chamber" (see attached floor plan drawings). In addition to the front staircase, there is a "private" stairway toward the rear leading from the kitchen to the upstairs hallway. The original woodwork throughout the house remains intact.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ___ A X B ___ C ___ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ART

Period of Significance

1908-1931

Significant Dates

1908

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Compton, Alma

Architect/Builder

Funk, Andrew / unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Constructed in 1908, this house is significant for its association with Alma Compton, whose success and longevity as a photographer are unmatched in the Brigham City area. Alma Compton began his career in photography in 1882 and continued until his death in 1931. The business that he established continues today under the ownership of his grandson. Compton's half-century career produced thousands of photographs which provide unrivalled visual documentation of the people, events, and buildings of Brigham City and other northern Utah communities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This house was Alma Compton's principal residence in Brigham City, and it is the building most closely associated to his life and career. It was designed and constructed for him and served as his home for 23 years. His studio, built in 1900, has lost its integrity, having been extensively damaged in the 1970s and subsequently remodeled.

Alma Walter Compton was born in England in 1856 and emigrated to the U.S. and Utah in 1868, accompanied by family members and other converts to the Mormon church. The Comptons settled in Ogden, and Alma and his brothers and sisters took odd jobs to help support the family. In 1882, after five years of working in the Scoville Broom Factory, Alma decided to become a photographer. He worked for a year without pay for photographer J. Crissman of Ogden to learn the trade. In the summer of 1883 he rented a tent and took his photography equipment on a tour of communities in southern Idaho and northern Utah. Upon his return, he chose to settle in Brigham City, approximately 20 miles north of Ogden. Brigham City was the county seat of Box Elder County and, with a population of 2500 at that time, the largest town in the area, so it would have afforded reasonable prospects for a successful photography business.

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Section number 8 Page 2 Alma Compton House, Box Elder County, Utah

In Brigham City, Compton first rented a portion of the photo gallery of Jens C. Gasberg for six months before constructing his own building in 1884. Gasberg is credited with being Brigham City's first photographer, having established his studio there around 1873.¹ Photography was not Gasberg's sole occupation, however. He also sold jewelry, optical goods, notions, and groceries. By 1888, Gasberg left the photography business altogether, though he continued as a successful grocer and merchant in Brigham City until his death in 1924.² From the 1880s through at least the 1920s, Alma Compton was apparently the only photographer in Brigham City, since no others are listed in the Utah State Gazetteer during that period.

In 1886, two years after establishing his business in Brigham City, Alma Compton married Jane Emeline Dalton of nearby Willard. She assisted him in his work, and their first two summers together were spent living in a tent taking photographs in Weber and Cache counties. Jane continued to help with the business even after their three children were born--Rosella, Alma jr., and Mathew. They later adopted another daughter, Jenny. The children also helped with the business when they were old enough.

As Alma's health declined during the 1910s, his wife and son, Alma jr., increasingly took over operation of the business. After Alma jr.'s untimely death in 1919, Mathew, the other son, was discharged from the military and returned home to help his mother run the business. Alma Compton died March 14, 1931, followed by Jane, May 25, 1932. Both Compton's business and his home were turned over to his son, Mathew. Mathew and his wife, Pearl, a three-year employee of the business prior to their marriage in 1921, continued to operate the family business for almost 50 years. Their son, Glen, has run the business for the past 20 years. Though Mathew died in 1972, Pearl is still living in the home.

Alma Compton's forty-plus years of work in the photography business produced an estimated 20,000 negatives, most of which are glass. The number of photographs that he took each year varied according to the economy and other factors. During the economically depressed 1890s he averaged approximately 250-300 photographs per year. His annual output rose dramatically at the turn of the century, reaching as high as 1500 before leveling off at about 500 per year during the 1905-1915 period. During Alma's last years of work, 1915-1920s, he averaged approximately 700 photographs per year.³

The Compton photograph collection is unrivalled as the most important visual record of Brigham City and Box Elder county during the 1880s to 1920s period. The collection includes portraits, photographs of local events and celebrations, and general scenes of buildings, streetscapes, and the countryside. Though Compton's only studio was in Brigham City, he took photographs throughout Box Elder County as well as in neighboring Cache and Weber counties and in southern Idaho.

In addition to their historical merit, the photographs also reflect Compton's considerable skills as a photographer. The artistic quality of his work is

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especially evident in many of the photographs taken outside the studio, often for his own purposes rather than a client's. Formal examination and evaluation of the collection by professionals has not yet taken place, since it has been only recently that the photographs were made available for scrutiny. Utah State University, which was given the collection by the Compton family, is currently cataloging and stabilizing the negatives.

Alma Compton's business building and his house were both constructed in the early 1900s, the years during which his business enjoyed unprecedented success. The two-story brick store was completed in 1901, replacing the small, false-front frame building that Compton had had built in 1886. The new building provided expanded facilities for photo finishing and allowed for the addition of art and music supplies to the store's stock. That building, which still houses the Compton business, was extensively altered in the 1970s, so it is not eligible for National Register designation.

Compton's house, on the other hand, has remained virtually unaltered since its completion in 1908. The Comptons moved into this house from the two-room, stuccoed adobe house next door, which had served as their home since 1887. That house retains its integrity, but it is not being nominated to the National Register at this time because its historical associations with Compton are weaker. Unlike the newer house, which was designed and built specifically for the Comptons, the older house was built some years before the Comptons purchased it. The newer house is also closely associated with the years of Compton's greatest success as a photographer.

This house was designed by Andrew Funk, the most active architect/builder in Brigham City during the early 1900s.⁴ Funk designed the Box Elder County Courthouse, the Brigham City Fire Station-City Hall and numerous other buildings in Box Elder County during the early 1900s. He later moved to Evanston, Wyoming, then to Ogden, Utah, working primarily as a carpenter and contractor.

¹"Early day photographers provide city with community picture album," Box Elder News, July 9, 1978.

²Jens C. Gasberg obituary, Deseret News, February 12, 1924, p. 2. Gasberg's son, James C. Gasberg, became a photographer in the Ogden area around the turn of the century (see the 1900 Utah State Gazetteer).

³Alma Compton Photograph Collection, Special Collection, Utah State University Library, Logan, Utah.

⁴The drawings of the house are in the possession of Alma Compton's daughter-in-law, Pearl Compton, the current owner of the house.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Box Elder Journal, November 2, 1972.

Box Elder News, July 9, 1978.

Compton, Alma W., Photograph Collection. Special Collections, Utah State University Library, Logan, Utah.

Compton, Pearl P. Interviewed by Larry Douglas, 1987, Brigham City, Utah.

Utah State Gazetteers. Miscellaneous issues, 1874-1921. Available at Utah State Historical Society Library.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): _____ See continuation sheet

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

___ previously listed in the National Register

___ previously determined eligible by the National Register

___ designated a National Historic Landmark

___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:
 State Historic preservation office

___ Other State agency

___ Federal agency

___ Local government

___ University

___ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 0.35 acres

UTM References

A	<u>1/2</u>	<u>4/1/5/4/0/0</u>	<u>4/5/9/5/3/2/0</u>	B	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	D	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
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_____ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning 55 feet S of NE corner of Lot 9, Block 4, Plat A, Brigham City Townsite Survey; thence S 77 feet, W 10 rods, N 77 feet, E 10 rods to beginning. Also beginning at the NE corner of Lot 10, Block 4, thence W 10 rods, S 1 rod, E 10 rods, N 1 rod to beginning.

_____ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary is based on the legal description of the property that has historically been associated with the building.

_____ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

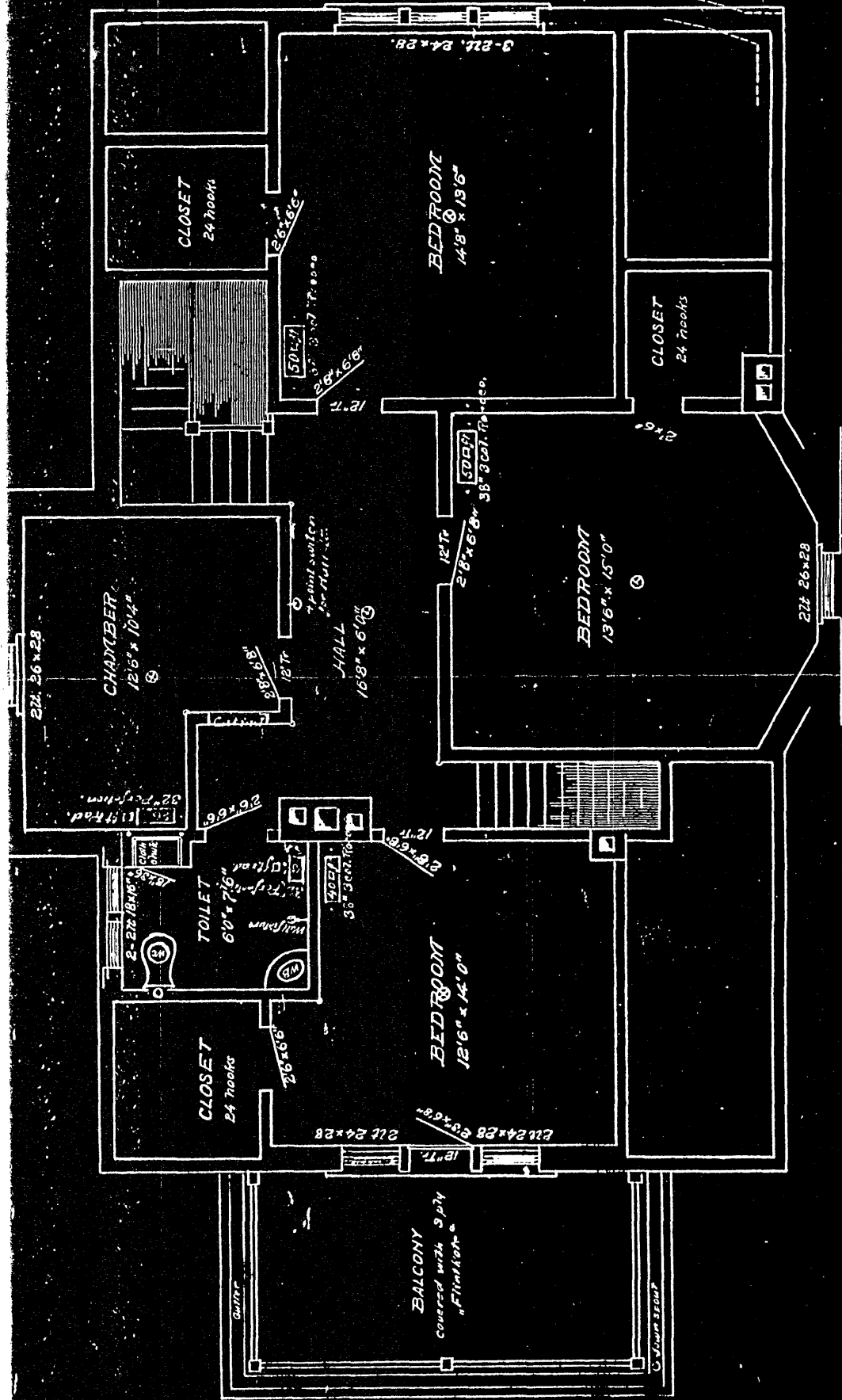
name/title Larry Douglass/Director; Roger Roper/Historian

organization Brigham City Museum; Utah State Hist. Society date February 1988

street & number P.O. Box 583; 300 Rio Grande telephone (801) 723-6769; 533-6017

city or town Brigham City; Salt Lake City state Utah zip code 84302; 84101

Alma Compton House
 Brigham City, Box Elder County, Utah



ATTIC PLAN.